

WORKSHOP'05 ARGENTA-RIDRACOLI (ITALY)

The participants

16 ecomuseums (or groups involved in forming an ecomuseum) participated in the 2005 workshop. They came from five countries (including Italy) and 9 Italian regions.

Another 3 Italian ecomuseums, one French and one Dutch, decided not to take part a few days before the workshop, due to other commitments.

Overall, the number of participants was like last year, with two important new features

- The number of Italian regions represented went up from 4 (Piedmont, Trentino, Emilia-R. and Tuscany) to 9
- About half the participants were not present last year.

Results

The results of the 8 mini-workshops were discussed on the 16th, in Argenta. As expected, a lot of discussions overlapped. Specifically:

Research. Three aspects emerged: research as an opportunity (for initiatives), for comparison (in order to establish whether ongoing work is going in the right direction), as a network (of people and ideas, within which to create initiatives).

Training and teaching. The model which emerged features

- Basic skills (learn by doing, ...)
- Professional training at various levels
- Training in specific areas (entrepreneurs, craftsmen, ...)
- Teaching in schools

One of the biggest problems is the lack of trainers.

Participation. This appears to be the central issue, running through all activities of the ecomuseum. Participation is not only a question of “how many”, but of “who” and “how” participate.

Activities which can be sustained over time. This topic could be premature for many ecomuseums. Cultural and economic aspects clash.

Identity. This is a “risky” topic, not worth going into for the moment.

Fundraising. No particular results.

Status and role. No particular results.

Networking. Expectations about a network are: exchange of ideas and experiences, circulation of best practice, mutual support in different tasks, on-going communication, promotion and lobbying, implementation of common projects, common fundraising, research, dissemination of the ecomuseum concept and methodology, cooperation with ecomuseums beyond Europe. Among the instruments to keep the network alive: visits and personal relations, an internet webpage, e-mail communication, availability of common materials (such as a guide to the ecomuseum, a database of skills and resources).

The problem of relations with other networks, similar to ecomuseums, was also discussed.

On the 17th, in Ridracoli, the workshop moved on to its proactive part.

The proposals concerned two basic areas: one based on the actors themselves (ecomuseums) and one based on actions (what to do). In the first case, the topics include



the definition of ecomuseums, criteria for identifying an ecomuseum and a network (who it represents, and who does what). In the second case, the topics focus on a functional definition of networking (what does it do, who does what).

The advantage of the first is that it presents a recognisable, authoritative organization but with the risk of top-heavy bureaucracy. The advantage of the second is that it is oriented to results, but risks creating poorly defined roles and a lack of democracy (someone decides, but it is not clear why or what for).

Basically, the two approaches were put together (using a little more of the functional approach): functional organization, but with the advantages of an organizational chart, albeit "lean". It was decided to study the possibility of creating an association.

Specifically, a number of actions were listed, with a facilitator (one or more) for each. The facilitator draws up an annual plan (for 2006), with schedule, costs, people and institutions to get involved, expected results and (at the end) an assessment of the results.

The actions included:

RESEARCH

- learning journey
- self-assessment grid

TRAINING

- teaching package
- "ideal" programme of training for an ecomuseum

PARTICIPATION

- caravan of work fields

COMMUNICATIONS-PROMOTION

- map of resources
- database of ecomuseums
- Guide to ecomuseums in English (and subsequently other languages)
- Webpage
- Itinerant exhibition
- Newsletter

STATUS

- Feasibility study for an association

Some of these actions were considered a priority, particularly the learning journey and website (and communications in general).

The with are as follows.

ACTIONS	FACILITATORS
Itinerant exhibition	Sandra Becucci, Donatella Murtas, Andrea Rossi
Teaching package	Fiorenza Bortolotti
Ideal training programme	Fiorenza Bortolotti
Association	Michele Cozzio
Caravan of work fields	Giuseppe Pidello with D. Murtas and F. Bortolotti
Website	Robert Dulfer
Ecomuseum database	Mirko Ceccato
Learning journey	Maurizio Maggi
Self-assessment grid	Maurizio Maggi

